



IN-DOE TA 2008

# Leadership in Complex Environments

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# **We want to:**

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**Reliably produce  
predictable outcomes for  
children, families, and  
communities  
that improve every year  
for the next 50 years**

# **We work in:**

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**Complex environments with**

 **Unpredictable people**

 **Competing demands**

 **Shifting priorities**

 **Various points of view**

# Leadership

**"All organizations [and systems] are designed, intentionally or unwittingly, to achieve precisely the results they get."**

**R. Spencer Darling  
Business Expert**

**Leaders move from reactionary to proactive and visionary styles of leadership to create more effective practices, programs, and systems.**

# Kinds of problems

## Tame Problems

 Often complicated (e.g. safety of nuclear generators, air traffic control)





## Wicked Problems

 Always complex (e.g. effective human service systems, educational reform)

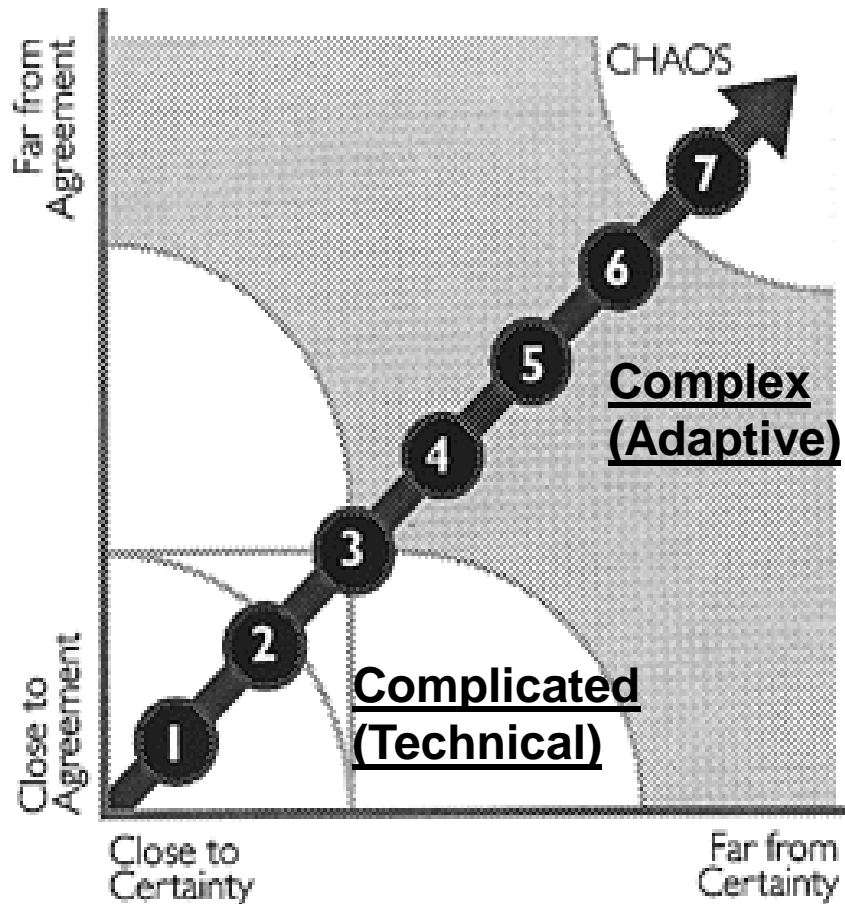
# Wicked problems

- They are messy, devious, and fight back when you try to “solve” them.
- Each attempted solution alters the nature of the problem.
  - “The problem” is a moving target.
  - Attempted “solutions” often make the problem worse, not better
  - “Solutions” as defined by one group are seen as “calamitous failures” by other groups

# Wicked problems

-  **Wicked problems are never “solved” in any final sense**
  -  **Circumstances are always changing and solutions need to keep up.**
  -  **Wicked problems are resolved**
    -  **Re-solved, as the context continually changes**

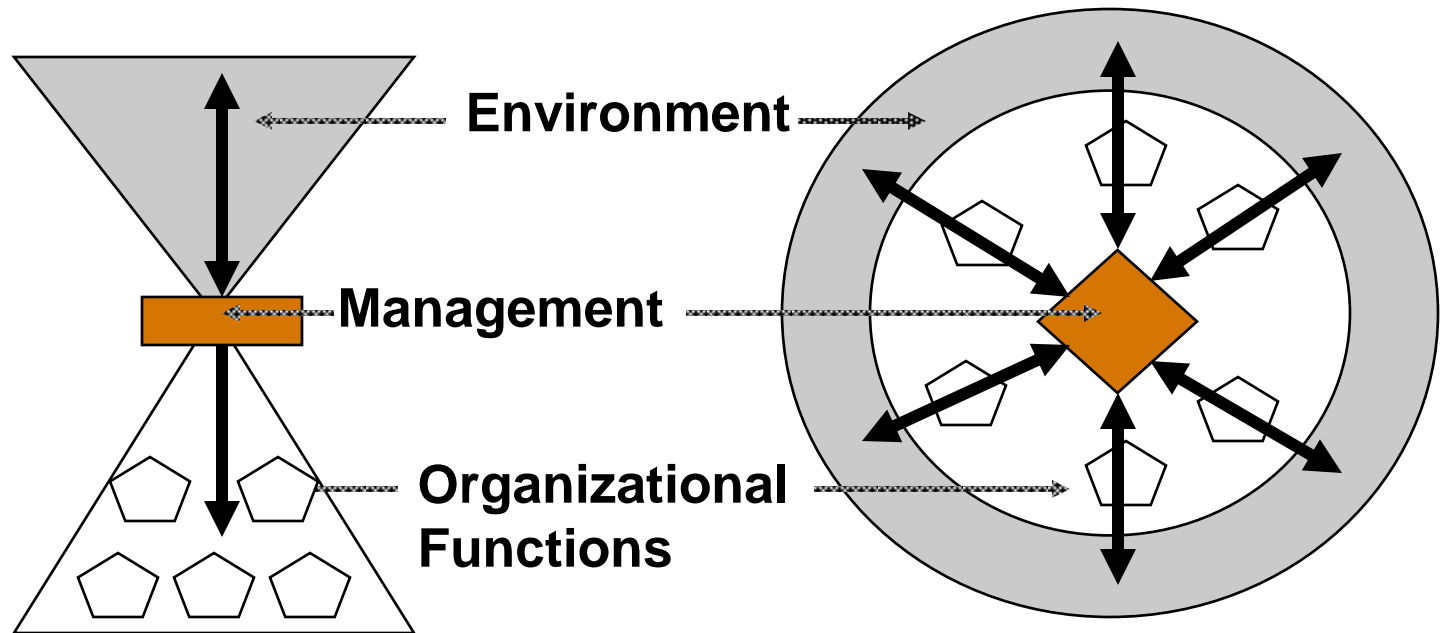
# Ralph Stacey



- 1 **Direct**
- 2 **Change Work Processes**
- 3 **Modify Structure**
- 4 **Convene and Intervene**
- 5 **Convene**
- 6 **Examine, Describe Patterns**
- 7 **Seek Patterns**



# Tackling Wicked Problems

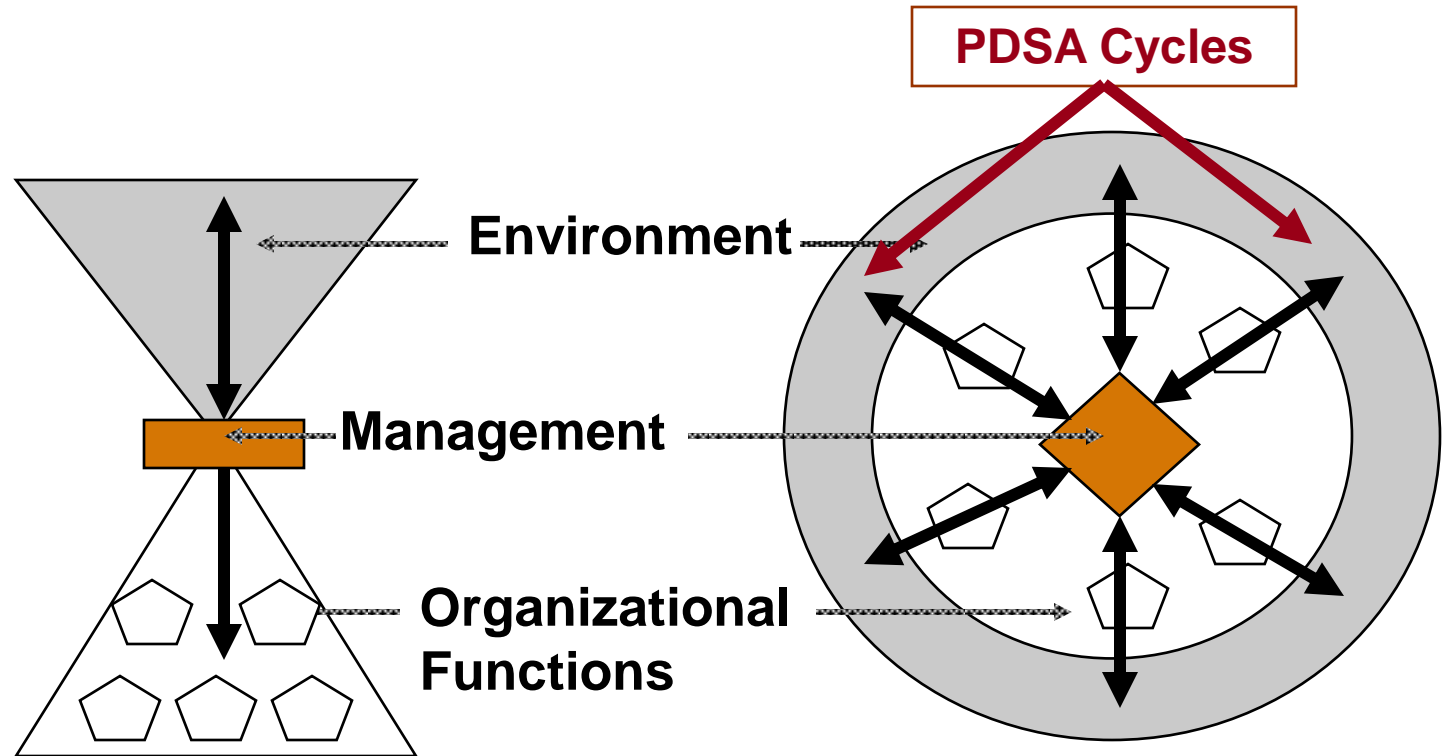


**Command & Control**

**Convene & Cogitate**

**Requisite Variety, Ashby, 1976**

# Tackling Wicked Problems



**Command & Control**

**Convene & Cogitate**

# Transformation Zone

**Shewhart (1924); Deming (1948); Six-Sigma (1990)**

➤ **Plan** – Develop specific things to do

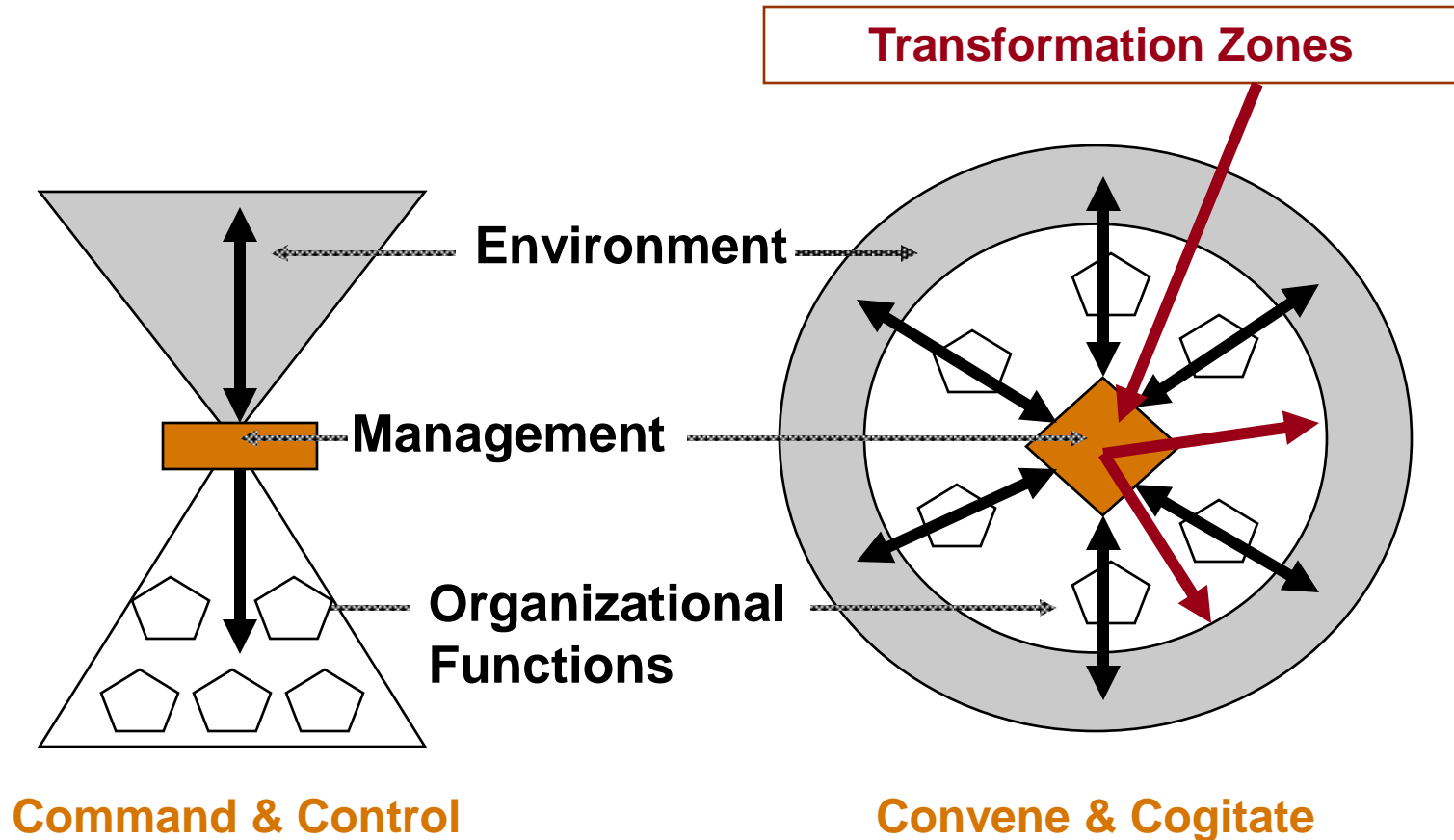
➤ **Do** – Do them (make sure)

➤ **Study** – See what happens

➤ **Act** – Make adjustments

➤ **Cycle** – Do over and over again until the goal is reached

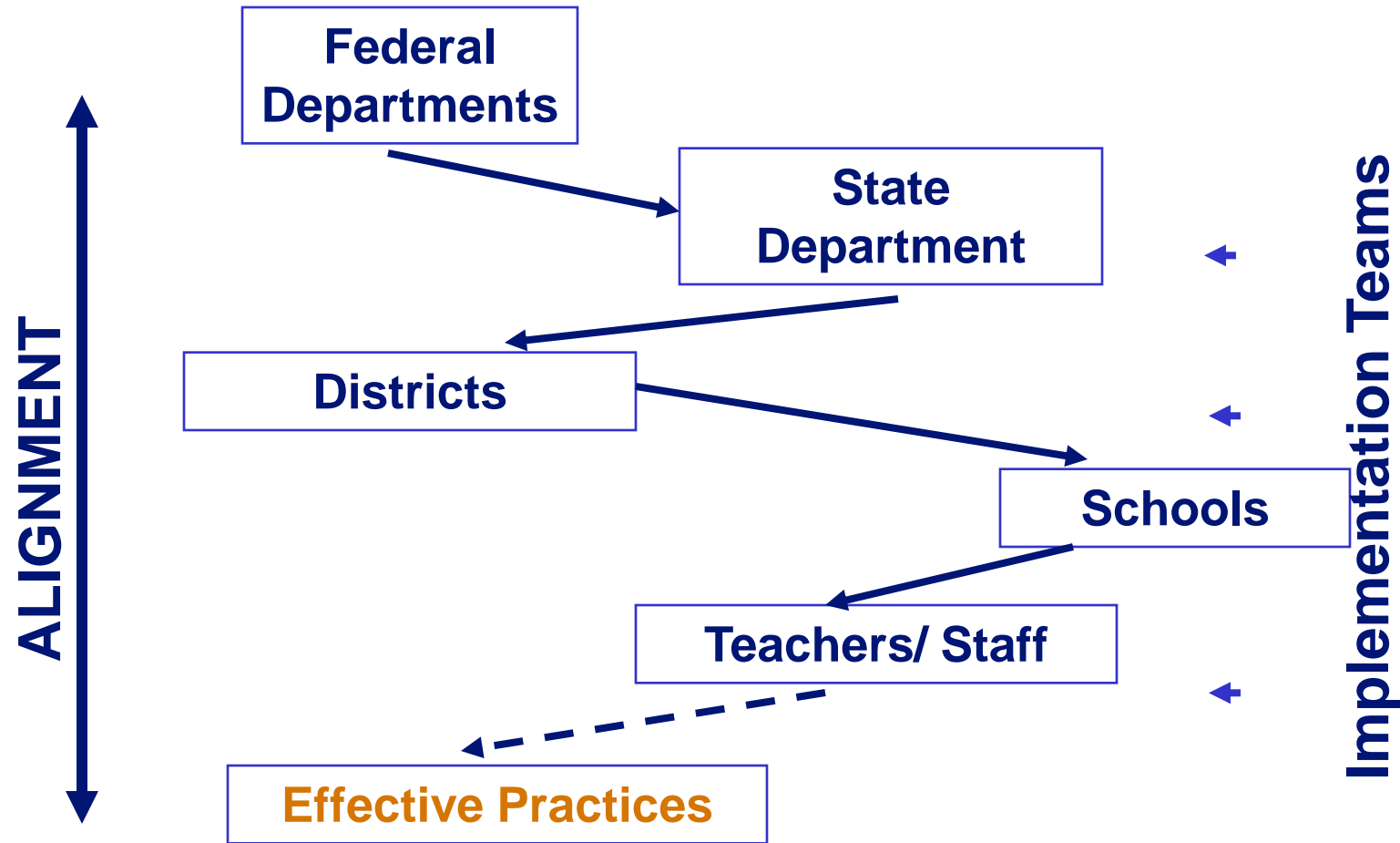
# Tackling Wicked Problems



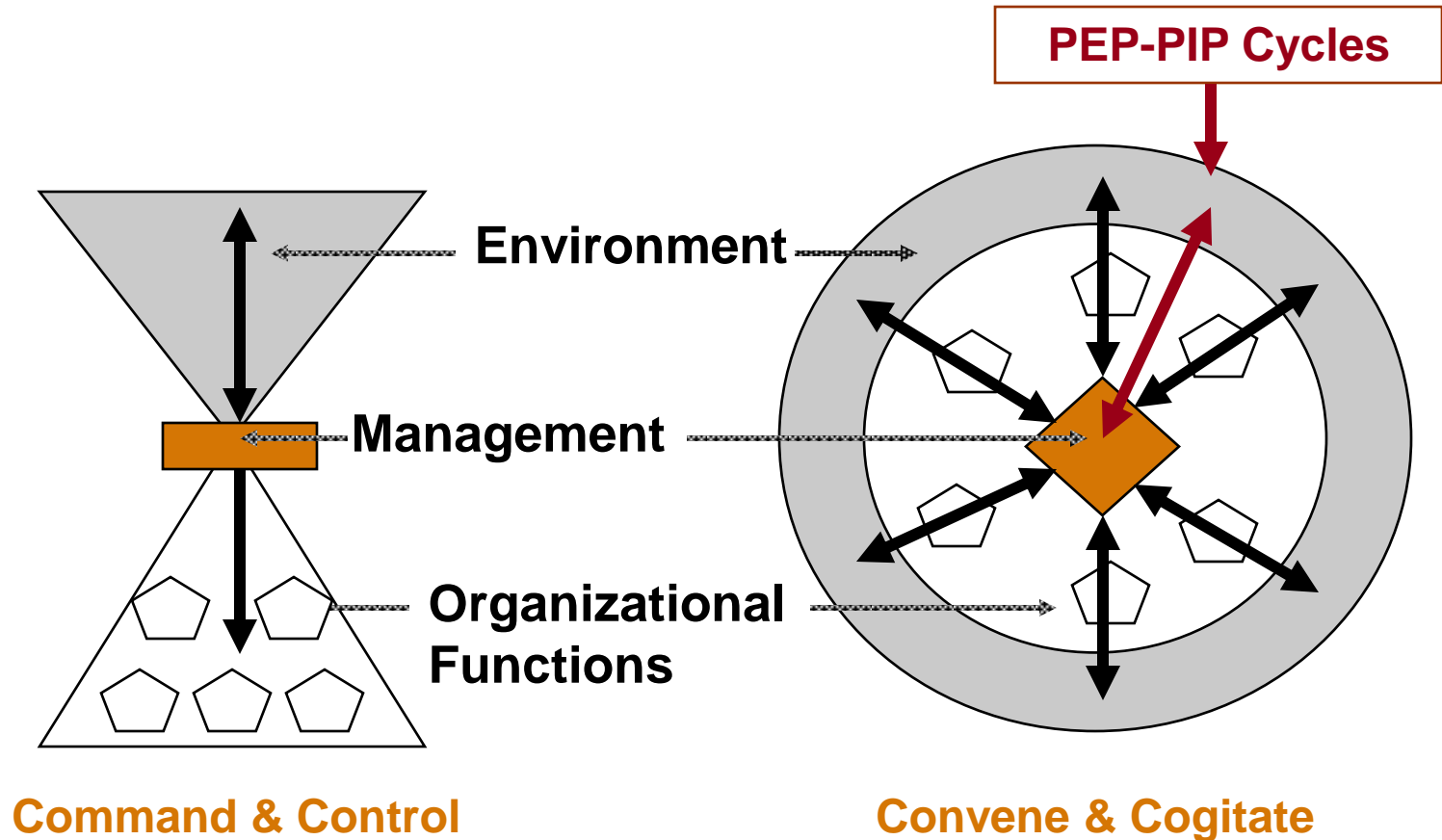
# Transformation Zone

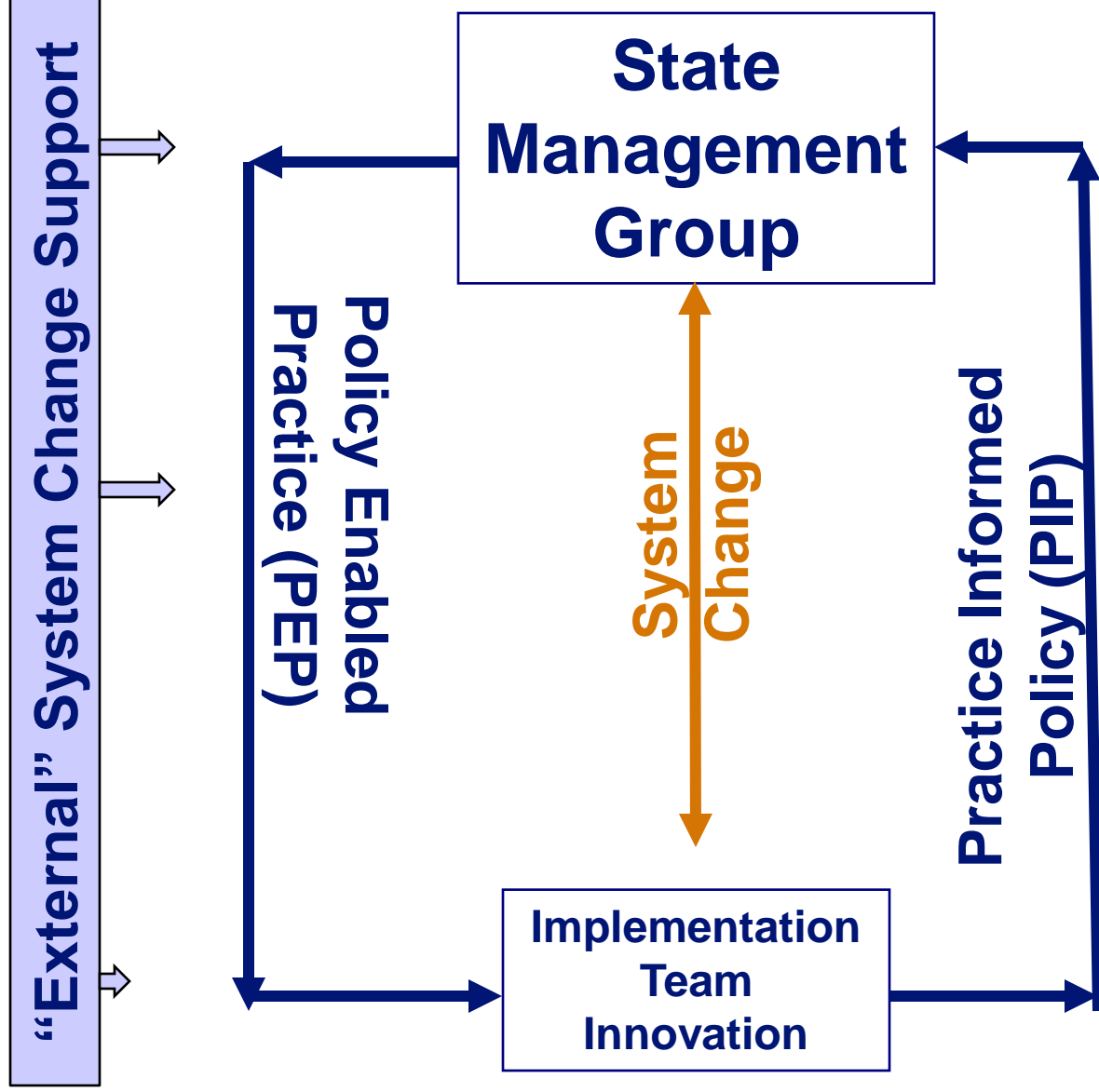
- A place to work out a functional version of an innovation
- Suspend/ bend the usual rules to find and solve usability problems
  - Expose facilitators and barriers within the organization
  - Reveal facilitators and barriers in the system
  - Identify/ develop implementation supports for the innovation

# Transformation Zone



# Tackling Wicked Problems













# Resistance to Change

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- **There is no such thing – only inadequate preparation**
- **It is not their problem, it is ours.**

# Stages of Change

-  **Pre-contemplation (Say what?)**
-  **Contemplation (Let me think about it.)**
-  **Preparation (I think I will do that.)**
-  **Action (I am trying it now.)**
-  **Implementation (I am working out the bugs as I try to do it.)**
-  **Maintenance (Say what?)**

**Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982**

# Student Benefits



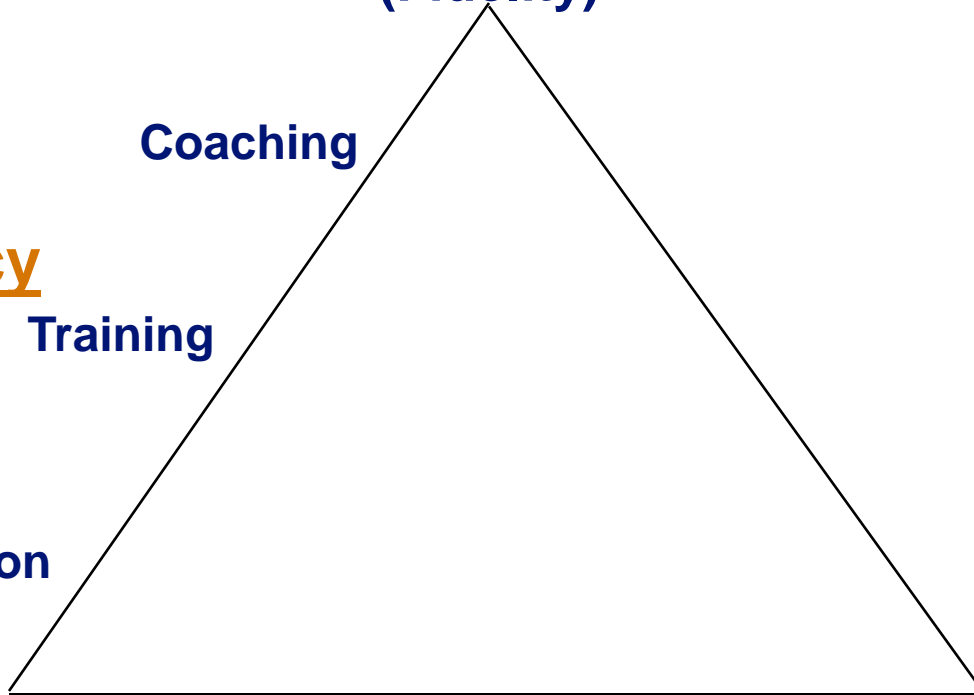
**Performance Assessment  
(Fidelity)**

**Coaching**

**Competency**

**Training**

**Selection**



# Student Benefits

## Stages of Implementation

- Exploration

Performance Assessment  
(Fidelity)

- Installation

- Initial Implementation

Innovation

- Full Implementation

- Innovation

- Sustainability

2 – 4 Years

Organization

Leadership

# Leadership









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Business Expert**

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# Thank You

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-  **Agency for Children and Families (Child Welfare Leadership Development contract)**

# For More Information

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**State Implementation and Scaling up of  
Evidence-based Practices**

**National Implementation Research Network**

**[www.scalingup.org](http://www.scalingup.org)**

**<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~nirn/default.cfm>**

# For More Information

## Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature



Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

*Download all or part of the monograph at:*

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~nirn/resources/detail.cfm?resourceID=31>